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INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

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To: • Mr. Joseph F. Cullman 3rd  
From: • Alexander Holtzman  
Subject: • Harvard Project

Date: July 6, 1972

The meeting at the Channing Laboratory on June 27 went well. I believe that the representatives of the five companies had a generally positive attitude toward the project. In the course of a thorough discussion with Dr. Gary Huber, some points were raised which may be the subject of discussion again on July 12. (Jack Roemer is preparing an agenda for that meeting which will be distributed in advance.)

1. Some companies feel that they should have more information about the details of the specific research projects on tobacco which will be undertaken at Channing. Dr. Huber is planning to distribute this week to the chief executives a document supplementing the information in his letter of May 4 to Alex Galloway. The majority feeling seems to be that the structuring of specific projects and the research methodology should be left to the Harvard group.

Dr. Huber summarized the two objectives of his proposed tobacco research program: a) To identify people at risk to smoking; and b) To develop a "safer" product for these people. He assured us that he has not prejudged the issue of whether smoking involves a "risk." His underlying philosophy is that smoking is a high frequency event with a low incidence of complication, and that there are things in tobacco smoke which affect biological systems in an adverse way. He believes that much of the evidence which has led to the conclusion that smoking is a significant health hazard comes from research which was not of good quality, and has resulted in some exaggeration of the "hazard." His feeling is that when the biological mechanisms of lung damage are explored, it will be found that there are many factors involved and the "risk" of smoking will be seen in better perspective.

2. Dr. Huber wants to avoid duplicating in his laboratories the talent and facilities of the tobacco industry. In order to carry out his work he would have to contract out some analyses to tobacco industry laboratories. He has visited the laboratories of most of the companies and has a good idea of their capabilities.

There was some discussion of whether the participation of industry scientists would jeopardize the credibility of Harvard. Huber maintains that the cost of duplicating tobacco industry experience at Harvard would be astronomical and he does not regard the credibility point as serious.

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July 5, 1972

A related point is the protection of any proprietary information that might be obtained from the tobacco companies. Researchers at Channing are not allowed to make non-disclosure agreements with industry. In a project now being done for Celanese Corporation to test their synthetic smoking material, Channing has agreed only that it will not distribute the material to Celanese's competitors. In publishing the results, Channing will not reveal the composition of the material.

3. One of the more serious problems is that fear has been expressed by people at Channing and Harvard that acceptance of research funds from the tobacco industry will result in heavy criticism from the medical community as well as internal criticism from the University. Dr. Huber and Dr. Edward H. Kass, the Director of Channing, will speak to the Dean of the Medical School before the meeting on July 12 and will let us know if there is going to be a problem in the University.

4. A major question with the Harvard people is whether the individual companies might use the research findings in connection with the marketing of cigarettes. Dr. Huber's predecessor at Channing, Dr. Gareth Green, was outraged in 1968 when L&M referred to his work as evidence that the harmful constituents of cigarette smoke were in the gas phase and implied that this finding favored LARK cigarettes. This incident has led the Harvard people to be wary of the tobacco industry.

When Huber asked whether the industry might exploit any research findings for marketing or publicity purposes, Stevens said Huber ought to assume that the industry will use any favorable results for whatever advantage it can get from them. Huber thought this was a reasonable position for the industry and in his personal view there is nothing wrong with it. However, he warned that people at Harvard have a different view of the matter. He was unable to say what assurances Harvard would request as to our use of any scientific findings. One suggestion is that we might agree to obtain clearance from Harvard before making use of any research findings.

5. Channing Laboratory is now working on two products related to tobacco. They are investigating the effects of marijuana smoke on the lungs under an NIH contract. They also have received funds from Celanese to investigate Cytrel. Within the next two years they expect to publish studies comparing the effects of these two products with the effects of tobacco.

This may be the major negative factor from our standpoint. The marijuana project, the Celanese project and the proposed tobacco project would all be running simultaneously and comparative health evaluations would be issued from this laboratory. If, say, the Celanese product tests better than tobacco, the tobacco industry would be in a poor position to denounce the results. Furthermore, the medical community could bring heavy pressure against the industry to act on the information produced.

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July 5, 1972

by Channing and adopt the Celanese material. In a sense, Celanese and the tobacco industry would be competitive bidders for favorable results on their respective products.

Celanese has already published some results from its own research indicating that its product tests better than tobacco in skin painting. NCI is also running tests on Cytrel now and presumably its results will be similar to those reported by Celanese. I think we must carefully weigh the consequences of giving assistance to research which might "prove" that a synthetic product is better than tobacco from a health standpoint.

6. The amount of funding that will be requested by Harvard is still uncertain. Harvard is bidding on research contracts from NIH for work relating to tobacco. The amount to be requested from the industry will probably depend in part on the amount Harvard is able to raise from NIH.

What Harvard seems to want from us at this point is an assurance of long-term salary support for several senior investigators and support staff whom they plan to recruit. Construction of new facilities is not an immediate objective.

Huber mentioned a ballpark figure of \$400,000 a year, but he doubts that he can spend even one-third of that amount in the early years of the project.

Assuming that these problems will be resolved, Dr. Huber will ask that the companies each appoint a representative to serve on a committee which will oversee the administrative and budgetary details of the project and a scientist to serve on a committee to discuss the scientific details.



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